

Plainfield Council on Aging

August 2025 Newsletter

Plainfield Council on Aging Town Offices
304 Main St., Plainfield, MA 01070

Polly Ryan, Coordinator
413-212-1581
pryan@town.plainfield.ma.us



**Let's walk around the Hawley Bog preserve on
Thursday August 7th at 10am (rain date
Wednesday August 13th).**

Just south of this address...124 E Hawley Rd,
Hawley, MA 01339

It is one of the few examples of an unspoiled bog and it can be easily accessed. A consolidated peat mat 30 feet thick floats on the open water of a deep glacial depression and supports an unusual community of plants, like orchids and carnivorous plants. Adjacent to the site is the historic early 1800's Hawley Town Common, including the original building foundations, which has additional easy walking paths and historic signage.

Please RSVP with Polly at 413-212-1581
or pryan@town.plainfield.ma.us
if you would like to join the walk.

**Our August luncheon
will be at the
Chesterfield General store on
Friday the 15th from
11:30 to 1:00 pm.**

The tab is on the COA but donations are welcome. Please RSVP with Polly at pryan@town.plainfield.ma.us or call 413-212-1581



**The Healthy Bones & Balance
exercise classes on Tuesday and Friday
at Cummington Community House
will be postponed until September.**

Instead, swimming in Plainfield Pond or aerobics in a pool will be offered on Tuesdays at 4pm.

Call or email Polly at 413-212-1581 or
pryan@town.plainfield.ma.us for more details
and/or to join the club.

**Join us at Windsor Lake in North Adams
for a picnic and concert on August 20th
from 6:30-8:30pm.**

(At the intersection of Bradley Street and Kemp Ave.)

The "Hale Mountain Band" will be playing. They are known for their lively performances of bluegrass music and have a presence on social media, including [Facebook](#). Bring a chair and enjoy a picnic with friends.

Please RSVP with Polly at
pryan@town.plainfield.ma.us or call 413-212-1581.
Carpooling can be arranged.



**Join us for Pizza and a movie at
Town Hall on August 23rd at 4 pm.**

The Oscar winner movie "Conclave" will be showing. (Unless everyone has seen it already, in which case we can decide on something else). The Catholic Church's most powerful leaders have gathered from around the world, locked together in the Vatican halls. Tasked with running the covert process of selecting a new pope, Cardinal Lawrence finds himself at the center of a conspiracy and discovers a secret that could shake the very foundation of The Church.

Pizza, popcorn and other treats will be had along with plenty of comradery. Please RSVP with Polly at pryan@town.plainfield.ma.us or call 413-212-1581.

**REACH OUT TO OUR COMMUNITY
CONNECTOR!**

Do you need help finding resources in the area? Please reach out to our Community Connector, Jen O'Connell. Jen can help with many issues, including: obtaining benefits such as Fuel Assistance, SNAP, Social Security, etc; continuing to live independently in your home; repairs; transportation assistance.

Jen can be reached at 413-296-4536 ext. 110
or communityconnectjo@gmail.com

Funded by a grant from HVES through funding under the Federal Older Americans Act

Ongoing Programs, Activities & Resources on the Plainfield Town Website



Tech Connect continues until the remaining funds are exhausted.

Whether you want to learn a new skill or need an upgrade, you can still get free equipment like iPads, Chromebooks, PC laptops, and even a desktop computer.

Email Nancy Brown at coatechtrainer@gmail.com or call 413-296-5080 to make a request. Or go to <https://northernhilltownscoas.org/> and submit your request through a form.

And...The Plainfield Library hosts drop-in tech support every 3rd Thursday of each month from 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm.

Tech Savvy, Plainfield resident, Lee Locke-Hardy, has graciously volunteered her time for this. Thank you, Lee!

Caroline Solan is our new SHINE Coordinator and can answer all your Medicare/Advantage plan health insurance questions.

She is available in person on Wednesdays at Highland Valley Elder Services (HVES, 320 Riverside Drive in Florence). You can also call HVES at 413-586-2000 and leave her a message or book an appointment. The most expedited way to reach her would be to send her an email at csolan@lifepathma.org.

If you have questions about MassHealth

call Buliah Mae Thomas at the Hilltown Community Health Center 413-238-5511 or email her at bthomas@hchcweb.org



Got Food?

There are several programs for receiving food and/or prepared meals delivered to your home regardless of your income. Check in with Polly to find one that fits your needs. Or go to www.plainfield-ma.us/council-aging/page/food-meal-programs

And, if you wish to help a neighbor by volunteering to pick up food for them, please let Polly know.

Grab and go hot meals are available for Plainfield's 60 and over residents at the Cummington Community House.

They can be picked up every Tuesday between noon and 12:30. To register or order for the first time, call Chrisoula at 413-634-2262 or email her at croumeliotis@cummington-ma.gov.

A suggested donation of \$3 per meal supports Highland Valley Elder Services who prepare them.

The Plainfield Mutual Support Network (PMSN) has a list of volunteers willing to provide rides to local vendors and medical appointments.

Please call 413-634-0170 a few days ahead to schedule something. Leave a message with your contact information and details of your transportation needs.

The next Foot Care Clinic is at the Community House in Cummington and is scheduled for September 2nd.

Please call Piper Sagan on 413-522-8432 to schedule an appointment (\$50) or a home visit (\$80/session).

Covid test kits (expire in August of 2025) are available.

Arrange to get some from Polly by calling 413-212-1581. She can also access durable medical equipment for you if needed. If she is unavailable call Jeannie at 413-522-1687.

Please consider doing Covid home testing before attending COA events to curb any spread.



August's Happy Birthdays

Imants Ansbergs, Norman Pfeifer, Carmen Sinno, Kimberly Longey, Karen Medeiros-Blair, David Honneus, David Westort, Ann Irvine, Maud Geng, Corey Powers, Guy Matsuda, Claude Dupont, Robert Baker, Steve Bzomowski, Donna Monroe, John O'Dea, Peter O'Brien, Steven Nartowicz, Bruce Rustemeyer, Susan Flores, Douglas Wabnig, Bruce Stockwell, Stephen Biagini, Alison Walters, Nancy Lawrence, Mary Sabourin, Christina Schneider, Avery Sharpe, Jeremiah Lobrose, Susan McMahon, Joan Wattman, Polly Ryan, James Lee, Merton Taylor, Pamela Wayne.





Regional News

SENIORS AWARE OF FIRE EDUCATION

Cooking fires are still the leading cause of residential fires and fire injuries. Here are a few things you can do and not do be a fire S.A.F.E. cook:



- Keep the area around the stove clear of groceries, food packaging, and other items that can burn, like paper towels, hand towels and oven mitts.
- Wear tight fitting sleeves or short sleeves when cooking.
- Stand by your pan while boiling, broiling, or frying food.
- In the event of a fire starting in a pan or pot,
 - smother it with a lid or cookie sheet.
 - Do NOT try to move a burning pan and
 - Do NOT it douse it with water for fear of spreading the fire.
 - Just PUT A LID ON IT!

If the cooking fire gets away from you, call 911 immediately.

Be sure to STAND BY YOUR PAN when cooking,

-- Worth Noyes, SAFE Educator Williamsburg & Cummington Fire Departments

The Senior SAFE program is sponsored by many of your fire departments and the MA Dept. of Fire Services.

DEMENTIA AND FINANCES

On one of my trips home, Dad activated my Power of Attorney because he caught himself writing two checks to a charity, which dismayed him with worry about doing worse. Probably all of us have a vague or possibly real fear of dementia. When it comes to finances, there is basis for that fear. This month's note

comes directly from a recent New York Times column by Dana G. Smith on financial problems as a sign of possible dementia. "People with dementia can experience money problems or declining credit scores years before memory loss, or other cognitive symptoms, emerge. They might forget to pay their bills, for instance, or no longer be able to stick to a budget.

"One of the reasons why financial mismanagement can be a sensitive indicator is just because it's so complicated," involving the interplay of multiple brain regions, said Dr. Winston Chiong, professor of neurology at the University of California, San Francisco. "Consequently, finances can be one of the first areas where cracks in someone's cognition start to appear."

The author points out that poor financial decision-making is especially a concern for those with frontotemporal dementia, a relatively rare form of dementia affecting judgement very early on in the disease. These people might make impulsive purchases and decisions. Others might be more trusting of people than they had been. That of course increases their risk of being scammed.

So I send this not to be scary and alarmist, but to pay attention to a possible warning signal such as missing bill payments, falling for scams, or seeing lowered credit scores. If a signal comes, it is important to have open and honest conversations about the future, to document important information early, and to develop support networks and people that can help us out.

Yours in health,

Jean O'Neil
TRIAD Committee member
jeanoneilmass@gmail.com
413-268-2228

TECH HELP AND TRAINING FOR AUGUST



GREAT NEWS!

TechConnect will continue providing services through a partnership with Northampton Open Media. Although we have fewer trainings going forward, drop-ins and tech support will continue. Please take advantage of ongoing services.

DELIVERING NOW & ACCEPTING NEW

REQUESTS: Internet Hotspots

It's not too late if you need affordable internet access. We have a solution that may work for you. Hotspots are small cellular devices you can use to access internet and work in most areas in the hilltowns. If you are interested in learning more, please contact us by phone or email. Call 413-296-5080 or email to coatechdevices@gmail.com.

TECH SUPPORT AVAILABLE BY APPOINTMENT

Receive technology help by email, phone, drop-in, or by appointment:

coaTechHelp@gmail.com phone or text msg 413-296-5080 or check the website, www.northernhilltownscoas.org, for locations and time. You can attend drop-in at all locations, except Nash Hill.

DEVICES FOR YOU: PC LAPTOPS, DESKTOPS, REFURBISHED CHROMEBOOKS, AND IPADS

There is still time to join the Digital World while supplies last. We have received more PC laptops, desktop computers, refurbished Chromebooks, and a few iPads. If you need a device to connect to the internet, have something so old it is not working effectively, or need a different type of device please contact us by leaving a message at 413-296-5080, or use the online request form on our website, www.northernhilltownscoas.org

DROP IN CENTERS:

ALL WELCOME AT ANY LOCATION
(no appointment needed)

Chesterfield Community Center 400 Main Rd.

Weekly on all Tuesdays from 11:00 to 2:00

One Friday in August from 11:30 to 1:30, on 8/1

DROP IN CENTERS: (CONTINUED)

Cummington Community House Drop-In tech support, 33 Main Street, 10 to Noon,
2nd Wednesday 8/13

Goshen Library, Drop-In tech support from Noon to 2:00, 3rd Thursday, 8/21

Plainfield Shaw Memorial Library Drop-In tech support, from 5:30 to 7:30, 3rd Thursday 8/21

Westhampton Library Drop-In tech support, from 2:00 to 4:00, 4th Thursday 8/28

Williamsburg

Meekins Library Drop-In tech support from 10 :30 to 12:30 2nd Tuesday, 8/12

Nash Hill Place Resident Drop-In tech support from 10:00 to Noon, 2nd Tuesday, 8/12

Worthington Drop-In tech support at COA office
– call COA for date/time

TECH TRAINING CLASSES AND WORKSHOPS:

MUST pre-register for training no later than one week before the scheduled training date. All classes held at the Chesterfield Community Center, 400 Main Rd, lower level.

To register email coaTechTrainer@gmail.com; call or text 413-296-5080, or sign up through the website www.northernhilltownscoas.org.

TECH WORKSHOPS AUGUST:

On Friday at 10:30 – 11:30 at Chesterfield Community Center

8/1 - Google Drive 10:30 – 11:30

COMPUTER CLASSES:

No ongoing computer classes are scheduled. An alternate online resource for basic training can be accessed, with help from us, at [Your paragraph text](#). We can setup your access to this website and help you begin to train yourself for very basic to more advanced beginner digital literacy.

On the Road Again...

2025 TRIPS



Contact Francine Frenier to reserve your seat **BEFORE** mailing payments. For more information call 413-296-4291

Email: francine.frenier@gmail.com

Mail to: 11 Stage Rd. Williamsburg, MA 01096

Day Trip Sept. 15th The BIG E, an annual favorite, with free entertainment at The Court of Honor Stage. The Stylistics perform hits from the 70's. Cost \$18 for Northampton Seniors, all other seniors \$20. Make your check payable to Barbara Kaczinski & send to 39 Leeno Terr. Florence, Ma 01062 by Sept. 1. NO REFUNDS due to bargain price. Bus leaves from Sheldon Field. NOTE: check info and mailing address.

NEW Day Trip WED. October 8 Historic Salem Cross Inn. Includes luncheon, choices available. Tour of Quabbin and Stop at Brookfield Orchards. Discounted price for Worthington Seniors over 60 and \$103 for other seniors. Call Phyllis 413-238-5962 or email coa@worthington-ma.us for details & to reserve a seat by Sept 1. Limited seating.

Day Trip Oct 9 A Chorus Line. Center orchestra seating for the 50th Anniversary Production at the Goodspeed Opera House in East Haddam, CT. Center Orchestra seating. Lunch at The Gelston House. Price \$177. Make your check payable to Landmark Tours and mail it to the address above by August 1. A few seats available.

Multi Day Trip October 12-18 Biltmore Estate & Smoky Mountains, Asheville, NC. Seven days, six nights. Visit the Biltmore Estate, the St. Lawrence Basilica, historic Gatlinburg, TN & Asheville, NC. Guided tour of the Smoky Mountains National Park. Price \$1,099. Make check payable to Diamond Tours and mail to address above. One bus only. Wait list still available.

2026 Multi Day trips to
Washington DC and Mackinac Island

Day Trip Dec 7, Sunday A Holiday Event in Waltham, Ma. Reagle Music Theater Players beloved Christmas extravaganza – 100 performers,

live orchestra, dancers, living nativity, and yuletide tunes. Pre-show lunch at the Chateau Restaurant. Price \$160 (approx.) Make check payable to Landmark Tours and mail to address above by October 13. Call or email above to be added to the Wait List

There are **day trips** to Bronx Zoo, Statue of Liberty, Salem, Radio City Rockettes all leaving from Chicopee. If interested, call 413-296-4291 or 413-593-3939 for more information.

GOOD NEWS FOR JULY 2025

By Deb Hollingworth

It's been awhile since I've talked about the Pharmacy Outreach Program which is a great resource for folks who have questions about RXs. This telephone help line (866) 633-1617 has been around for about 20 years and is available M-F 8:30 to 5. Located at UMass Medical in Worcester, and funded by the MA College of Pharmacies and Executive Office of Aging & Independence. Their information line can connect you with pharmacists or information specialists who understand prescriptions and the drug plans that cover them.

They can tell you about drug interactions, generics vs. brand names, whether there is another RX that might work as well as the one you are currently taking and review your prescription list. But the number one question information specialists get is about RX cost. And if you are one of those folks who take more than 8-10 RXs daily, co-pays mount up and can be a financial hardship.

If there's a less expensive way to get your RX, the Pharmacy Outreach information specialists will know. Whether it's manufacturer's patient assistance programs, prescription discount cards, Rx coupons, free trial offers, manufacturer co-pay cards or co-pay foundations. They can guide you through the labyrinth of options.

As you might guess their phones ring off the hook during Open Enrollment (October 15th - December 7th) when it's time to pick a Medicare D plan for the coming year. They have already begun taking appointments for Open Enrollment, so if you have a complicated RX list with multiple medications with significant co-pays, you might want to give them a call (866) 633-1617. Book your appointment now!

PLAINFIELD COUNCIL ON AGING
304 MAIN STREET
PLAINFIELD, MA 01070

Plainfield COA

Polly Ryan,
Coordinator 413-212-1581

Shirley Todd, (Chair)
413-634-5032

Mary Potter, (Secretary)

Susan Honneus

Bonnie Phillips

Peg Whalen
Regional Newsletter

nhills7newsletter@gmail.com

This newsletter is supported by the Cummington Council on Aging

SCAM ALERT!



*Did you get a message saying that you have **unpaid toll charges?***

The message warns that your license or registration will be cancelled or suspended if you don't pay.

WHAT TO KNOW

WHAT TO DO

-Stop! It's a scam!

-Don't click on the link in the message to make a payment.

-Call EZDriveMA at (877) 627-7745 to see if you owe

If you have a consumer problem or question, contact the

**Northwestern
District
Attorney's
Consumer
Protection Unit**

**Greenfield
(413) 774-3186
Northampton
(413) 586-9225**

**Working in cooperation
with the Office of the**